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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 002185

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SUBJECT: TURKEY/IRAQ: GOT TO PRESS HASHIMI ON
RECONCILIATION; EXPRESSES RENEWED CONCERN ABOUT BARZANI

REF: BAGHDAD 2802

Classified By: CDA Nancy McEldowney for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The GOT is bringing GOI VP Tariq al-Hashimi to Ankara August 23 for meetings with PM Erdogan and FM Gul to press for reconciliation as Turkish officials promised PM Maliki during his August 7-8 visit here. The Turks will use the visit to urge dialogue and constructive participation by Tawafuq and other Sunni groups. The GOT has not yet received an invitation from Iraq for a September 8-9 experts-level Expanded Neighbors meeting, but does not believe holding it in Baghdad is a constructive proposal. END SUMMARY

HASHIMI VISIT

¶2. (C) GOT Iraq Coordinator Amb. Oguz Celikkol told Charge on August 22 that the GOT would send PM Erdogan's personal plane to Baghdad August 23 to bring IZ VP Hashimi to Ankara for meetings with PM Erdogan and FM Gul. The Turks had told PM Maliki they would engage Iraqi Sunni leaders to urge continued participation in the political process, an effort Maliki supports and appreciates, according to Celikkol.

¶3. (C) Celikkol said he had met several days previously with Ayad al-Samarraiae of Tawafuq to hear directly what Tawafuq's conditions are to re-join PM Maliki's governing coalition. Samarraiae indicated Tawafuq wants to see impartial implementation of the security plan; a restructuring of IZ military forces to provide better disbursement of Iraqi Sunni troops in Baghdad; better Sunni representation at senior levels of the military's deployed forces in and around the capital; and a release of many of the 31,000 prisoners, mostly Sunni, whom Tawafuq claims were imprisoned without benefit of due process.

¶4. (C) Celikkol indicated the GOT wants to act as a sounding board for Hashimi, listen to his concerns and then assess whether a PM Erdogan call to Maliki might help narrow the schism between Maliki and Hashimi.

CONCERNS ABOUT BARZANI ACCUSATIONS

15. (C) Celikkol also raised GOT concerns about a statement on the website of Massoud Barzani's KDP which referred to Turkey's Consulate in Mosul as a center for espionage, not diplomacy, and accused Turkey of undertaking intelligence activities designed to undermine the KRG, with the support of the Syrian government. Celikkol said GOT officials in Mosul are there only for outreach and to assist northern Iraq, be it through emergency assistance, such as the provisions and medical help Turkey has provided in the aftermath of mass casualty bombings, or through development assistance. Celikkol added that the GOT plans to raise its concerns directly with the GOI.

EXPANDED NEIGHBORS PREPCOM

16. (C) The GOT has not yet received an invitation to a September 8-9 experts-level meeting of the Expanded Neighbors in Baghdad, according to Celikkol. The GOT would have no problem attending such a meeting in Baghdad, but does not believe insisting on a Baghdad venue is productive. The Saudis and perhaps others will refuse to attend and the GOT is not prepared to press them to do so. Celikkol said the last time the Neighbors met in Baghdad, it was counter-productive, visibly demonstrating the GOI's lack of control over the security situation. While it makes the most sense to hold a meeting on the margins of UNGA, the Turks are prepared to meet anywhere to discuss preparations for the Istanbul ministerial.

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